



Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans



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VBA Business Lines – Atlanta VARO

- Disability Compensation and Pension
 - Education
 - Loan Guaranty
 - Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment
- ❖ The Atlanta VA Regional Office is the only RO with all 4 Business Lines.



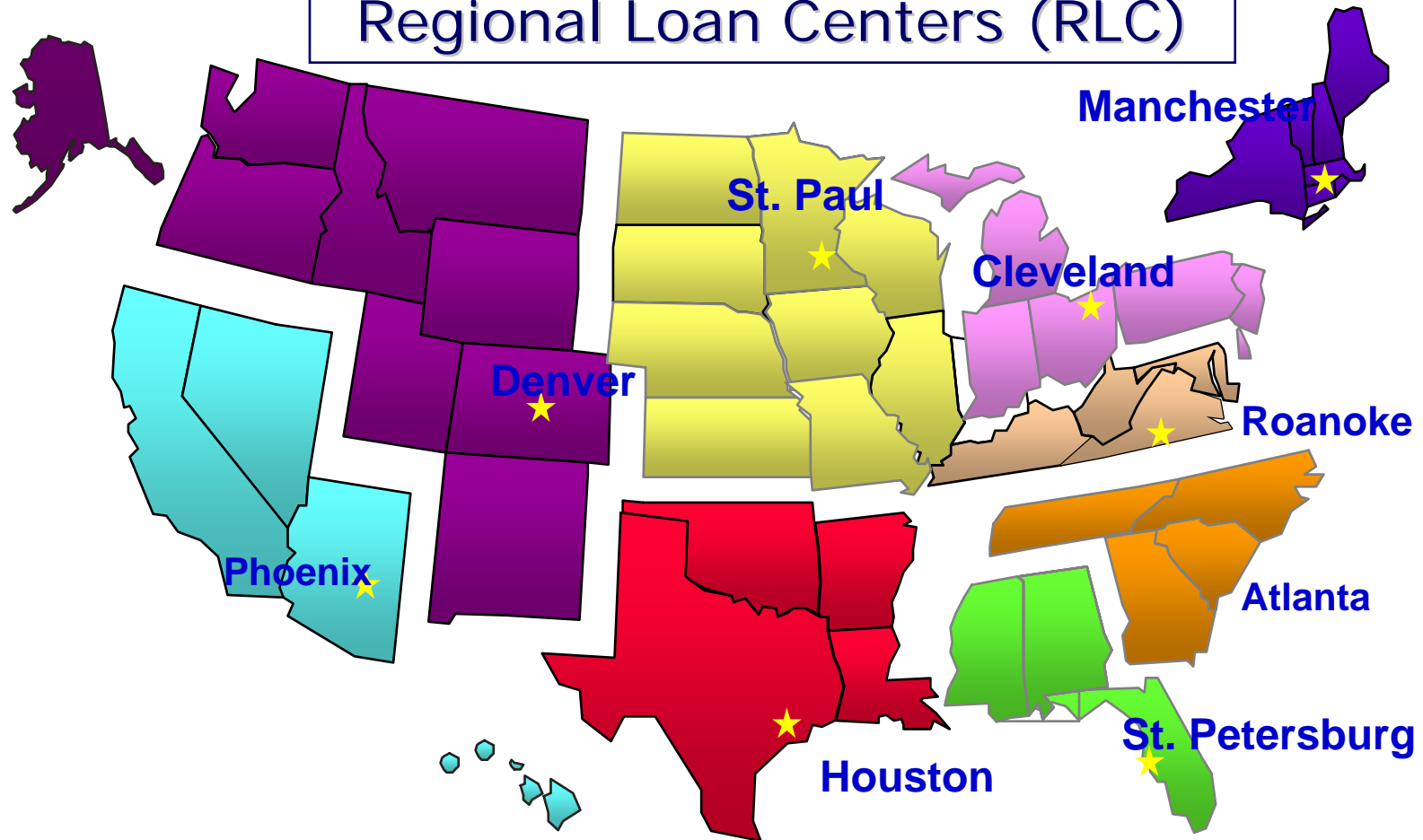
Georgia Veteran Population by Period

Total Population	765,289
• Gulf War	194,692
• Vietnam Era	231,622
• Korean War	55,746
• WWII	50,880



Loan Guaranty

Regional Loan Centers (RLC)





Loan Guaranty

- VA home loans may be used to:
 - Purchase a home
 - Purchase a residential unit in certain condominium projects
 - Build a home
 - Refinance an existing home loan
 - Improve a home by installing solar heating or other energy conservation measures



Loan Guaranty

- Types of Loans:
 - Purchase Loans
 - Refinance Loans
 - Interest rate reduction
 - Other refinancing (I.e. Cash-out)
- No maximum loan amount
 - Lenders generally set a maximum, based on rules of the secondary mortgage market
 - Maximum VA guaranty is 25% of the conforming loan limit as reported by Freddie Mac



Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment

■ Primary Objectives:

- Enable veterans with service-connected disabilities and employment handicaps obtain and maintain suitable employment
- Enable veterans to achieve maximum independence in daily living when the severity of the disability prohibits suitable employment
- Vocational and educational guidance and counseling to assist service members, veterans, and certain veterans' dependents in selection of an appropriate career goal and training institution



Gulf War and Undiagnosed Illnesses

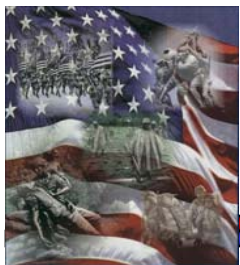
- 38CFR 3.317: Applies **only** to Gulf War veterans who served in the Southwest Asia Theater of Operations during the Persian Gulf War.
- Veterans who served during the Gulf War but were **not** stationed in the Southwest Asia Theater of Operations are not entitled to benefits under 38 CFR 3.317.



Gulf War and Undiagnosed Illness

38 CFR 3.317 allows for service connection to be established in one of three ways:

1. A disability resulting from an **undiagnosed illness**;
2. A medically unexplained chronic multi-symptom illness that is defined by a cluster of signs or symptoms; and
3. Any diagnosed illness that the Secretary determines in regulations warrants a presumption of service connection.



Gulf War and Undiagnosed Illness

Definition of "Undiagnosed Illness"

1. "Objective indications of chronic disability" include both "signs" in the medical sense of objective evidence, perceptible to a physician, and other, non-medical indicators that are capable of independent verification.
2. Chronic = 6 months or longer.
3. Became manifest either during service or to a degree of 10% at any time prior to 12-21-11.
4. The disability is not attributable to a known diagnosis.



Claims based on exposure to Environmental Hazards

What the Veteran must do:

- Tell VA the specific disability that is the result of exposure to environmental hazards, since exposure in and of itself is not a disability.
- Tell us where you received medical treatment for the disability that is related to your exposure to environmental hazards



Claims based on exposure to Environmental Hazards

What VA must do:

- Obtain all Service Treatment Records (STRs)
- Request reports of all private and VA medical treatment indicated by the veteran
- Obtain the Gulf War Registry exam if the veteran tells us he/she had one conducted



Claims based on exposure to Environmental Hazards

- VA will also request a VA or QTC medical examination be conducted. The veterans claims file will be sent to the examiner for complete review.



DES Program-Atlanta VARO (Ft. Stewart)

- What is the DES Program?
(Disability Evaluation System)
- It is a joint initiative between VA and DOD. Its purpose is to ease the transition of service members undergoing an MEB and future military discharge to civilian life



DES Program - Atlanta VARO (cont.)

- DES opened at Ft. Stewart on December 1, 2008.
- 111 Service Members enrolled in program.
- Service Members attend one comprehensive protocol-based medical examination which is used by both the MEB and PEB



DES Program - Atlanta VARO (cont.)

- VA determines the disability evaluations for both unfitting medical conditions and additional medical conditions claimed by the service member.
- VA expedites the award of disability compensation for separating service members.
- Two VA Regional Offices will prepare the rating decisions: Seattle and Baltimore.



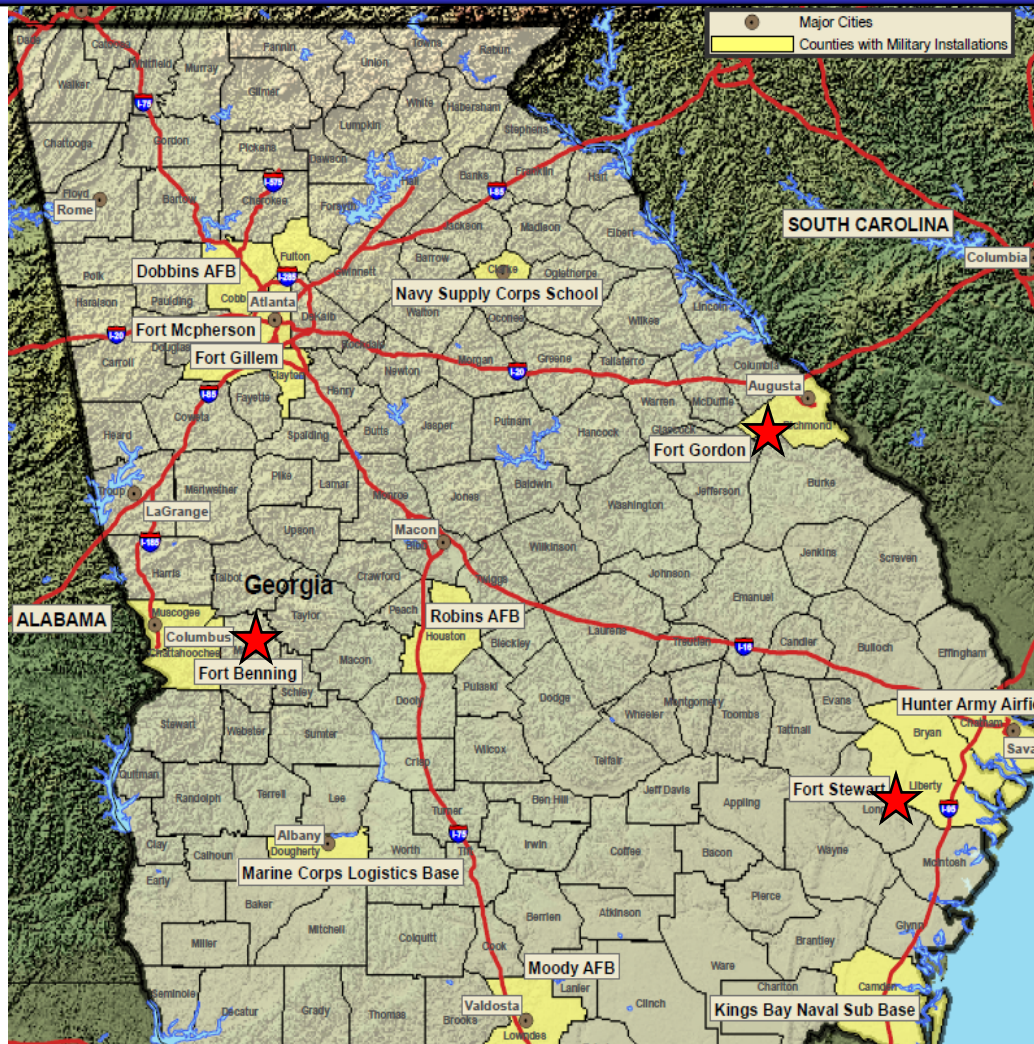
DES Program - Atlanta VARO (cont.)

DES - Future Expansion Sites

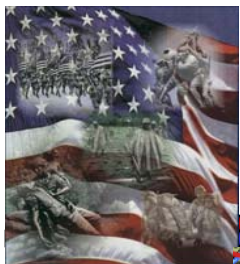
- Ft. Benning (Columbus, GA) - May 2009
- Ft. Gordon (Augusta, GA) - Late 2009, early 2010 (tentative)



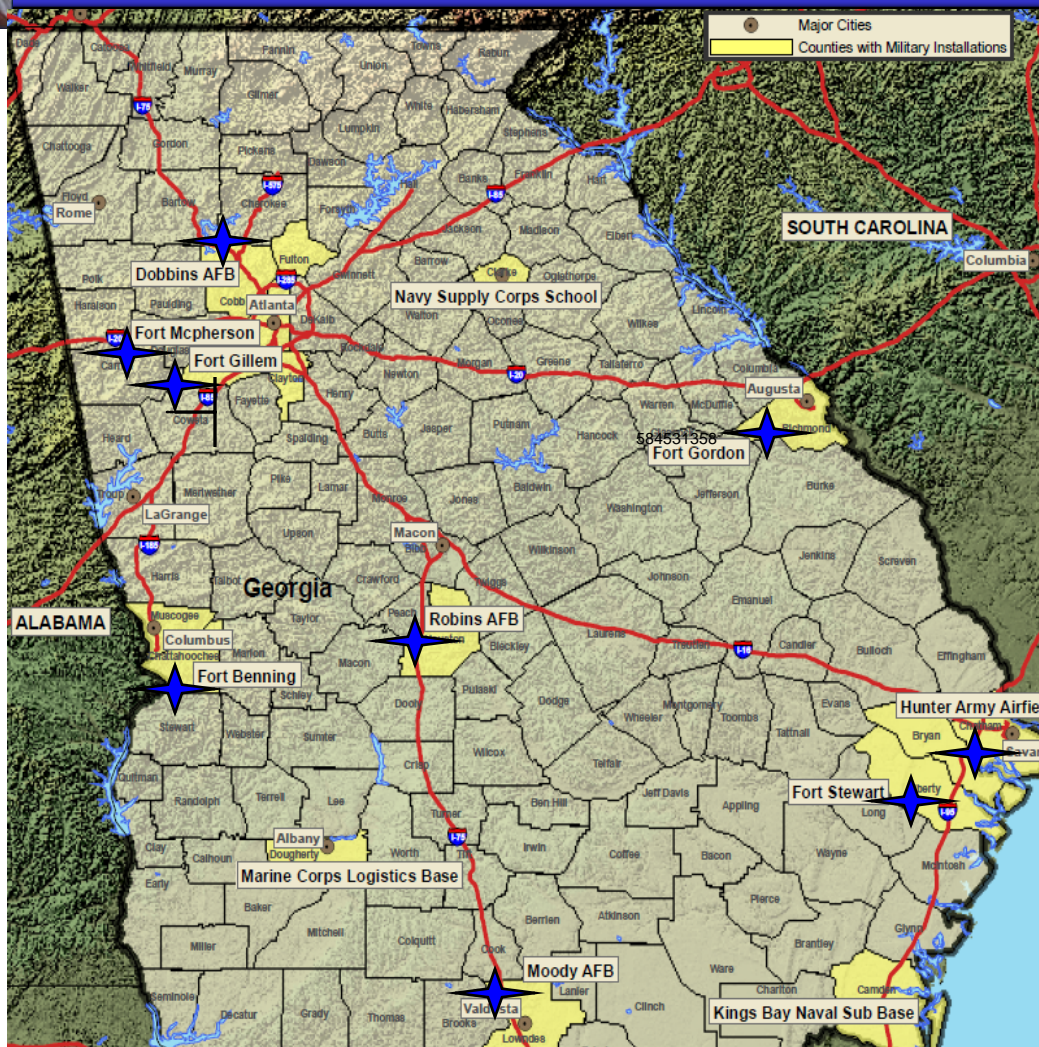
VARO Atlanta – Benefits Delivery at Discharge (BDD) Sites



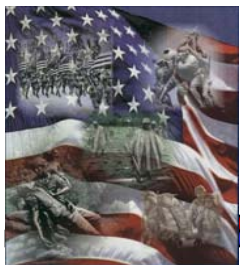
- Fort Benning
- Fort Gordon
- Fort Stewart



VARO Atlanta - Outreach Efforts



- TAP/DTAP Briefings
- Demobilization Briefings
- Supermarket of Benefits
- Homeless Vets/Stand-down



VARO Atlanta - Outreach Efforts

- 2008 - Assisted with 1109 TAP/DTAP Briefings, serving 22,953 Service Members
- 2008 – Assisted with demobilization of 109 Georgia National Guard Units – 1800 soldiers
- November 2008 assisted with Homeless/ Veteran's Stand Down – Over 400 veterans participants
- December 2008 assisted with demobilization at Fort Jackson MS



VARO Atlanta - Outreach Efforts

- 2008 – Claims taken in by the BDD sites totaled 2851
- 2009 – Assisted with demobilization of 117 soldiers from a MP Company- Fort Stewart



Questions



For C & P questions
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Education Benefits - Topics of discussion

- Montgomery GI Bill – Active Duty (Ch 30)
- Montgomery GI Bill- Selected Reserves (Ch 1606)
- Reserve Educational Assistance Program (CH 1607)
- Post 9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008 (CH 33)



Chapter 30 – Category 1

Eligibility requirements

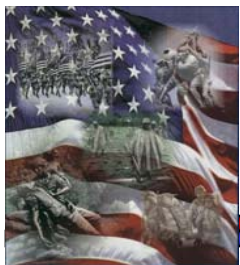
- Entered active duty for the first time after June 30, 1985
- \$1200 non-refundable contribution
- Served continuously for 3 or more years or for 2 years if original commitment was less than three years
- Did not decline MGIB in writing
- Have honorable service for the active duty period



Chapter 30 – Category 1

Eligibility requirements (continued)

- For 2x4 program:
2 years of active duty followed by 4 years in the Selected Reserve
Must join Selected Reserve within 1 year of separation from active duty



Chapter 30 – Category 1

Eligibility requirements (continued)

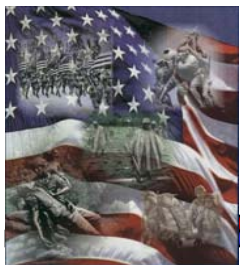
- Reserve/Guard members may qualify for Chapter 30 if they:
 - Were called to active duty after July 1, 1985
 - Had no active duty before July 1, 1985
 - Served on active duty continuously for 24 months with an honorable discharge
 - Completed DD Form 2366 while on active duty
 - Paid the non refundable \$1200



Chapter 30 – Category 2

Eligibility requirements

- Entered active duty before January 1, 1977
- Had remaining entitlement from Vietnam Era GI Bill (Chapter 34) on December 31, 1989
- Must have been on active duty at any time beginning on October 19, 1984 and ending on July 1, 1985 and continued on active duty during that period without a break in service and then have served at least 3 continuous years beginning July 1, 1985.
- If not on active duty on October 19, 1984, must have served on active duty on or after
- July 1, 1985 and served 3 continuous years in the Selected Reserve



Chapter 30 – Category 3

Eligibility requirements

- Was on active duty September 30, 1990 and separated involuntarily after February 2, 1991 or
- Involuntarily separated on or after November 30, 1993 or
- Voluntarily separated under either the Voluntary Separation Incentive (VSI) or Special Separation Benefit (SSB) program
- Must not be eligible for Chapter 30 under Categories 1 or 2
- Paid \$1200 before separation
- Elected MGIB on DD Form 2366



Chapter 30 – Category 4A

Eligibility requirements

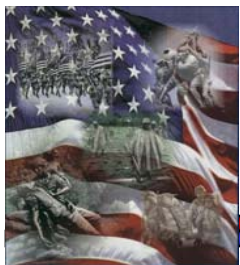
- Was on active duty October 9, 1996
- Participated in the Veterans' Education Assistance Program (VEAP)
- Had funds remaining in VEAP account
- Elected Chapter 30 on or after October 9, 1996 and before October 9, 1997
- Paid the \$1200 for Chapter 30



Chapter 30 – Category 4B

Eligibility requirements

- Entered full-time National Guard duty under title 32, U.S.C. (state service) between July 1, 1985 through November 1989
- Elected Chapter 30 between October 9, 1996 through July 8, 1997
- Paid \$1200 for Chapter 30
- No previous active duty service



Chapter 30 – Category 4C

Eligibility requirements

- Must have been a VEAP or Section 903 participant on October 9, 1996.
- Served continuously on active duty from October 9, 1996 through at least April 1, 2000.
- Elected Chapter 30 between November 1, 2000 and October 31, 2001.
- Paid \$2700 within 18 months of electing Chapter 30.



Chapter 1606

Eligibility requirements

- Have a six year obligation to serve in the Selected Reserves (signed after June 30, 1985)
- Completed initial active duty for training (IADT)
- Received a high school diploma or equivalency certificate
- Remain in good standing while serving in an active Selected Reserve unit



Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP)

Eligibility requirements

- A member of a Guard/Reserve component who serves on active duty after September 11, 2001 for a contingency operation and who served at least 90 consecutive days or more may be eligible.
- Individuals are eligible as soon as they reach the 90 day point.



REAP (con't)

- Currently, qualifying members were called under:
- Sections 688, 12301(a), 12302, 12304, 12305 and 12406 of Title 10 or Title 15 or
- Any other provision of law during a war or national emergency as declared by the President or congress
- Guard members are also eligible after serving 90 consecutive days on active duty if the service is:
 - Under Title 32 section 502(f) and
 - Supported by federal funds and
 - Authorized by the President or Secretary of Defense for a national emergency

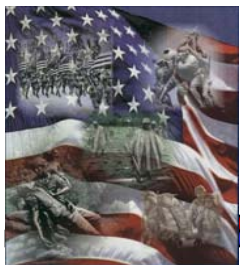


Chapter 33 – New GI Bill

The Post 9/11

Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008





Chapter 33 - Eligibility

Eligibility requirements

- Served at least 90 aggregate days on active duty after 9/11/01 and
 - still active duty or
 - honorably discharged from active duty; or
 - honorably released from active duty and placed on the retired list or temporary disability retired list; or
 - honorably released from active duty and transferred to the Fleet Reserve or Fleet Marine Corps Reserve; or
 - honorably released from active duty for further service in a reserve component of the Armed Forces



Chapter 33 – Eligibility (con't)

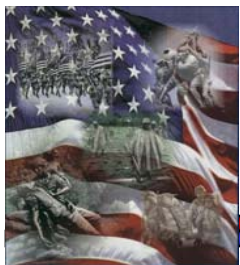
- Based on the length of active, participants are entitled to a percentage of the following:
- Cost of tuition and fees, not to exceed the most expensive in-state undergraduate tuition at a public institution of higher education
- Monthly housing allowance* equal to the basic allowance for housing payable to a military E-5 with dependents, in the same zip code as the school
- Yearly books and supplies stipend of up to \$1000 per year
- A one-time payment of \$500 paid to certain individuals relocating from highly rural areas



Chapter 33 – Service Requirements and Percentage Rates

Service Requirements % Rates

At least 36 months	100
At least 30 continuous days on active duty (Must be discharged due to service-connected disability)	100
At least 30 months, but less than 36 months	90
At least 24 months, but less than 30 months	80
At least 18 months, but less than 24 months	70
At least 12 months, but less than 18 months	60
At least 06 months, but less than 12 months	50
At least 90 days, but less than 06 months	40



Questions ?



For Education
Questions
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